

NOW THEN.

A MAGAZINE FOR SHEFFIELD. ISSUE 56. FREE.
FRANÇOIS RÉAU. WARP FILMS. MARK GRIST.



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NOW THEN IS A FREE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE IN SHEFFIELD.

We aim to cultivate choice, voice and responsibility by providing a platform for independent art, trade, music, writing and local news. We support Sheffield's economy by only working with independent traders, community groups, charities and local government.

Almost all articles published in this magazine are written by members of the community, not professionals. If you don't like what you read or have something that needs to be said, get in touch. Your opinions make Now Then what it is.

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Enjoy the read.



Evolutionprint



EDITORIAL.

Another cracking issue for you this time around, held together by a stunning art submission from François Réau. We are proud to showcase a whole range of artistic styles and movements in Now Then, but François' work breaks new ground for us as a publication. The level of depth and attention to detail is superb. Read our interview with him on page 35.

The words are just as strong, with a feature by Alex Keegan celebrating ten years of Warp Films, a piece about council outsourcing by local campaigner Nigel Slack, and an interview with schoolteacher and poet-turned-rap battler Mark Grist, who performed his Dead Poets show for us last month as part of one of our Off The Shelf events.

Now Then Manchester continues to go from strength to strength, with issue #2 due out in December. If you are interested in getting involved or know someone who might be, talk to Ian Pennington on ian@nowthenmagazine.com. The more the merrier.

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LOCALCHECK.

GO LOCAL, GET GLOBAL.
HOSTED BY ALT-SHEFF.

We tend to be a bit local, here in Sheffield. The city doesn't feel like one of those world-level metropolises. In fact it's often called a collection of little villages. It's also noted that many people come here to study and decide to settle down in our green and pleasant town. Does this mean that we're keeping our heads below the parapet, for fear of the big wide world outside? Worse still, are we xenophobic Little Englanders with no interest in other people and their problems?

I think not. Groups like the EDL are, thankfully, tiny minorities. On the contrary, many good people in Sheffield have deep concerns for global issues. We can't solve the world's problems from here, but activists are aware of this, and usually balance a wider vision with realistic ideas of what we can do.

Take a look at what's happening right now. The great news of the moment is the award of a contract for a Sheffield television channel to Sheffield Local Television (SLTV). This will air on Freeview and over the internet. You might think it'll be just another hyper-local medium for advertising and folks grumbling about how holes in the road aren't what they used to be, but I don't think so. The team that formed SLTV is also behind Sheffield Live! radio station. If you've ever tuned in, you'll know that this is not just any radio station. It's a real multicultural mix from all areas and walks of life. A breath of fresh air in the stale world of slick and glossy media. It gives a voice to real Sheffield people and to the city's many community groups. SLTV's Paul Gregory says the new channel will take the same lively approach, as a local initiative with a global outlook.

Elsewhere in international news, over 500 students from all over the UK descend on Sheffield this month for the annual convention of People & Planet, which is a student organisation focussing on the big environmental, human rights and economic issues. It will have an excellent range of speakers, coming from as far away as South Africa, so it's hardly a parochial event. This follows on the heels of Sheffield hosting the gathering of the Young Greens, the under-30s wing of the Green Party, including a visit by its new leader, Natalie Bennett.

The Black Fish group will also visit to describe their activist approach to the scandal of industrial overfishing. Dutchman Wietse Van Der Werf will explain the successes and trials in their mission to change attitudes towards our oceans. And there's a discussion of the issue of UN peacekeepers involved in rape, torture and exploitation of women in the sex trade during the Bosnian War.

These events, with Sheffield people acting in solidarity with others around the world, are just a few picked out from the events section of the Alt-Sheff website. There are many organisations in the city with an international focus.

One long-established group campaigning at global level is the World Development Movement (WDM), which raises awareness and fights for justice for the poor. Sheffield's group is very active and is currently focussing on food. There are problems ranging from unsustainable, capital-intensive farming, to land grabs, to toxins threatening food supplies. These are serious global issues, but they're not simply "abroad". Britain's dodgy debt deals with developing countries are linked, as the so-called Tax Justice Bus reminded Sheffield people during its recent UK tour. British corporations are profiting from poverty and hiding the profits in tax havens. We're not isolated from reality; we're intricately linked.

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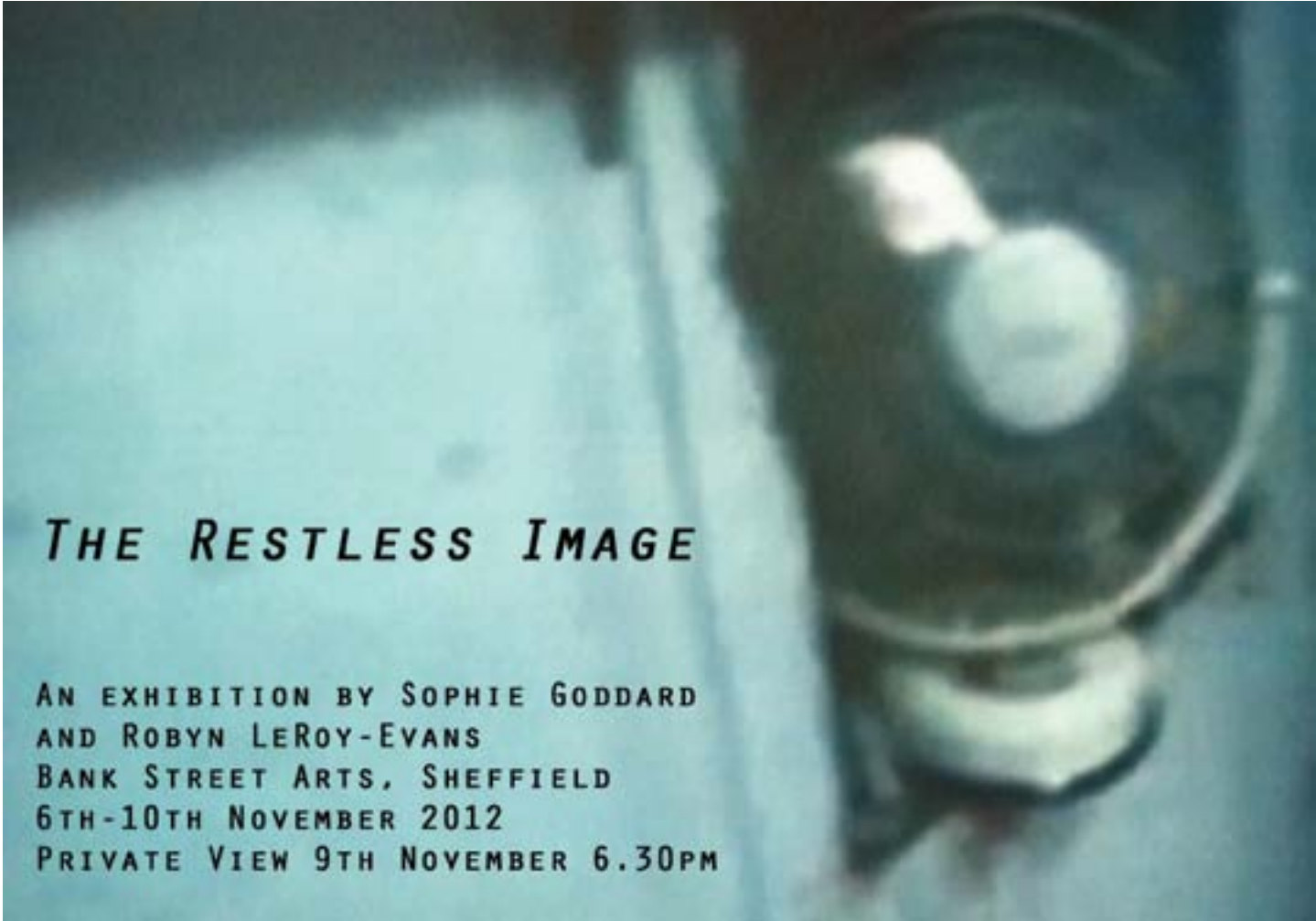
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OUTSOURCING.

PUBLIC SERVICES, PRIVATE PROFITS.
NIGEL SLACK.

Like most people, until recently I had little idea about the number of Sheffield’s public services that were being delivered by private companies. I’d seen that my bins are collected by Veolia, that many of the staff at the Town Hall wear Kier badges and that there seem to be any number of vans driving around purporting to be working ‘in partnership’ with Sheffield City Council. But when I heard that our Council were congratulating a multinational bus company for securing public funding to buy new buses, I started to wonder – why is the taxpayer buying new buses for a profit making company? So I started asking questions at Council meetings and opened a new can of worms – the world of outsourcing.

The first thing I found out was that 61% of our Council’s budget is spent on what are termed third party contractors – private companies, voluntary organisations and charities. The Council pays the contractor to deliver a service and the contractor pays the workers, buys the materials and does the work. That is a huge £730 million each year. Of this, nearly £220 million is spent by just 11 companies. Finding this information was relatively easy, so next I began wondering how much of the money spent with these companies is profit.

Getting that information has proven more difficult. First we come up against the problem of “commercial confidentiality”. Each of these contracts has a confidentiality clause which means that although the Council knows how much profit these companies make out of us, the taxpayer doesn’t. I continued to push for some information, even if it was just a total value for the last financial year, respecting confidentiality. Finally, after four months, I managed to get a partial answer.

Taking 8 of those top 11 companies, the average profit margin was 7%, or £9.2 million. If we assume the other three will be similar, the total amount in profit siphoned off by the top 11 companies was around £15.4 million. This at a time when we are being told that the Council will be making hundreds of redundancies and having to find an extra £10 million in savings next year. The Council likes to suggest that this money is re-invested into the local economy, but in truth most of it is paid in dividends to parent companies or used to hike up unreasonably high directors’ pay deals during a time of austerity.

My wider research has shown that one of Sheffield’s outsourcing companies paid almost all of its profits in dividends to shareholders, while another pays its CEO every two weeks what it takes an average employee 12 months to earn. This is before we even start to consider the levels of tax that they pay or don’t pay.

My concerns are being reflected in the outside world. The Guardian, on 22nd June, commented, ‘It does not seem unreasonable to ask whether rewarding shareholders is an inevitable cost in this sector.’ Channel 4 News has recently run a series of reports called Who Rules Your World, identifying an increasingly small number of powerful companies involved in public service outsourcing.

The main concern is transparency. We, the public, know very little about what these companies do for us and even less about what happens to the money they make. More to the point, we can’t even find out because private companies, even those providing public services paid for by the taxpayer, are not covered by Freedom of Information laws.

Even the consultants advising the outsourcing industry are questioning the lack of public oversight and indeed the extent of the practice into sensitive areas. The recent problems with Southern Cross Care Homes and the tragic abuse of girls in the care of Rochdale Social Services highlight areas that are clearly unsuitable for private profit solutions. An influential advisor to outsourcing companies recently commented, ‘That Rochdale example really caused me to question the whole ethos of using the private sector for such services.’

If we want councils to deliver democratic services that embody the values of equality, impartiality, communal good and public service, we need to know all we can about who is delivering those services and where the money goes. We deserve a transparent, accountable, ethical and honest policy from our councils about what is and isn’t acceptable in the world of outsourcing. Sheffield City Council isn’t yet there but if we ask the right questions we can make that difference.



WARP FILMS.

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS.
ALEX KEEGAN.

Warp Records needs no introduction. Nearly all those reading this magazine will be aware of this city’s post-industrial musical identity, which the label managed to meld into a dizzying succession of analogue bleeps, kicks and crashes that forged a sound that is wholly synonymous with Sheffield’s metallic industrial past. Despite having now moved to London, the sound of synthesisers pushed to their limits still reverberates around the seven hills. But the company, whilst best known for their musical output, has also graced the presence of another medium, that of film, and this year sees the tenth birthday of its sister company, Warp Films.

The label had already established a significant visual style, thanks to director Chris Cunningham, a surreal talent whose deranged and visionary videos perfectly translated the musical essence of key Warp figures like Aphex Twin and Squarepusher, whilst also maintaining a persona that was as mysterious and hermetic as the artists he was working with. However, it was through a collaboration with demigod satirist Chris Morris and producer Mark Herbert in 2002 that the company made its first substantial statement in the film world – **My Wrongs #8245-8249 & 117**, a 12-minute black comedy starring Paddy Considine as a fumbling man manipulated by a talking dog who claims to be his lawyer, due to defend him in court for his life’s wrongdoings. The project won a BAFTA and the Warp Films legacy had begun, just as the record label had done 13 years earlier.

‘Having something that was as recognisable as the record label and as cool as the record label helped’, Barry Ryan, Herbert’s working partner and Head of Production at Warp Films, tells me on a Wednesday morning in their Sheffield office. ‘There’s a shorthand there. For people who understand and are aware of the label, there’s an association with Warp within the industry, culturally and among journalists. It was quite a significant thing. There was an expectation about what kind of films we’d make. We’d have strange conversations at first when we were looking at going into TV, with people saying ‘Oh you’re Warp, can you just do cool stuff for us?’ and we thought – the minute we set out trying to do something that’s cool, we’d be shooting ourselves in the foot as we don’t even have the right haircuts. It’s the wrong way to go about creating something. But the idea is that you work with artists, you work with people you believe in and that you support them in what they do.’

This mindset, practised throughout the music label’s career, has clearly been upheld by the production company, who exhibit a handful of strong and fruitful professional relationships, and the longevity of these has meant that artists’ voices are given time to develop and strengthen, all whilst the scale and quality of the company as a business grows. Such an organic and reciprocal nurturing process has helped the company’s output become renowned not only for its quality, but also as representing a hearty endorsement by its producers concerning the artists involved.

The most renowned of these collaborations is with Midlands writer-director Shane Meadows. Mark tells me about how this came about: ‘Thanks to Paddy saying we should meet Shane as he thought we’d get on. He was saying to Shane, in reference to me: ‘Here’s somebody our age who’s not posh with a double-barrelled surname from London’. Invariably lots of producers came from that background and Shane and Paddy found it hard to communicate with them. Shane had a very singular vision and lot of producers were trying to tailor that into the norm of filmmaking. So we said what if we made a film with you, take your favoured filmmaking process and allowed you to do that? And he was like: ‘Fuck it, let’s do it’.

WARP FILMS.

CONTINUED.

The resultant film was **Dead Man’s Shoes**, a low-budget revenge drama set in the Derbyshire countryside, following a soldier returning from combat, seeking to hunt down and punish the gang who bullied his disabled brother.

Numerous innovative approaches, altered in the face of a director’s needs, allowed Warp Films to work in a way that was unique and could produce a film that reflected that freshness. Such techniques included ‘shooting chronologically, because [Shane] often changed the script because sometimes a character would come in and be brilliant but in the script not be used in more than four scenes; using practicals (i.e. lights found on set), as if you’ve got a good director of photography then you don’t need loads of lights’; and not shooting a scene because it benefited practicality rather than story. As a result, the actors’ organic performances, along with the spontaneity of the filmmaking techniques, helped Warp’s films stand out from lots of the British fodder, which either tried to poorly replicate Hollywood or became obsessed with its own caricature. ‘What we offered was a different way to look at stories. For Shane the attraction was that we could meet half way in Chesterfield.’ These approaches, along with the geographical distance between Warp and their counterparts, created a sense of mystery that left the London-centric industry waiting for their next big project.

After Dead Man Shoe’s, Shane realised – ‘Warp is my home now, as they appreciate the way I work’, and with the tremendous critical reception to the film, the company had the confidence and financial freedom to let Meadows run freer and with more artistic gusto. The result was **This is England**, which drew upon the director’s childhood experiences of developing within a skinhead community whose identity embracing Afro-Caribbean immigrant culture is forgotten with the rise of English nationalism. The film did unpredictably well domestically and internationally, and helped establish Meadows as the accessible auteur that his previous works had suggested he was. However, what this film represented wasn’t simply a director realising his true vision. It also acted as a reminder that its realisation wouldn’t have been possible without the creative refinement and professional freedom that Warp Films brought to the director, and therefore showed what a collaboratively fruitful process working with this production company in particular was. It was at this point that it seemed clear that Herbert, Ryan and co had established a unit that promised longevity whilst embodying the right kind of values, which paid tribute to and fitted comfortably alongside its older musical sibling.

The next few years saw Warp finding their feet again in the wake of such unpredictable success. They established Warp X in 2005, a strand specialising in producing digital features, releasing a handful of low-key features, from tragicomedy documentaries (**A Complete History of My Sexual Failures**) to morally questionable provocations (**Donkey Punch**). For most outsiders this was seen as a quiet lull in the Warp journey, but one only need cast a retrospective eye over the consequent years to deduce that this must have in fact been a period of productive dormancy.

2009 saw a host of successes such as **Bunny and the Bull**, **All Tomorrow’s Parties**, and **Le Donk and Scor-zay-zee**. Such variety helped remind people that Warp Films was more than just ‘Shane Meadows Productions’ (despite him directing the latter). These once again fleshed out the philosophy with which the company had approached their earlier films, offering a unique opportunity for artists to work creatively with a budget which they otherwise wouldn’t have had access to or would have been more strictly controlled over. What became clear is that even when some films weren’t as successful, such as that year’s **Hush**, they were still trying to identify with the Warp brand and therefore a viewing of them could help viewers try to grapple with where the company was heading – an exciting prospect with such a diverse range of works being released.

The next year saw another step up in output as they consecutively released **Four Lions**, **Submarine**, and **This is England ’86**, all to massive critical and box office acclaim. The former was a reuniting with their first project’s director Chris Morris, the latter was another Meadows project, this time a TV-sequel to his 2005 magnum opus. Submarine was a more unpredictable affair, as it saw IT Crowd comedy star Richard Ayoade take the directing reins to produce a bold coming-of-age comedy which heartily expressed itself as an ode to the spontaneity of the French New Wave filmmakers of the early 60s. Once again, a relatively new filmmaker had been taken by Warp, nurtured and given the freedom to express themselves in a way which was exciting and cinematically confident.

This chain of successes led to last year’s films: the traumatising yet-fabulously well judged **Kill List**, the heart-breaking **Tyrannosaur**, and **Snowtown**, a serial killer flick which saw the establishment of a Warp strand in Australia of all places. Given the Northern locality of Warp and the successes it had garnered as a result, this seemed a surprise move. The truth in its decision is far more haphazard, given Herbert only originally went to Australia as an excuse to see his expatriate brother. ‘For some reason the timing was so spot on, Australia was reinventing the way it made films – much more international appeal even for low budget. So we just came up with this idea of having a strong brand like Warp run by someone we trusted over there. A lot of our work has been seeing an opportunity and seizing it by the balls. That’s the truth of it. Like, ‘Shit there’s loads of money in Australia and my brother lives there, let’s do something over there!’ Snowtown was a success thanks to the confidence and experience Warp brought to the table and the trajectory of the company’s antipode relative promises to be as unpredictable as the Warp journey so far.

So what does the future hold? The company has a distinguished international market lapping up most material they put out thanks to their daring and often extreme filmmaking decisions. Their latest, **Berbarian Sound Studio**, has still left a maniacal image on my retinas which I’ve yet to decipher.

Mark says: ‘Well, I’ve got three kids, and ‘daddy’s got a new film!’ ‘Snowtown? No, you’re not going to watch that.’ ‘What’s Donkey Punch about, daddy?’ are conversations I often find myself in, so we are planning to do a family film, but with a Warp twist. And it’s not because it will make us loads of money, but because we all want to do one. We’re all at that age where we’ve got young kids, and I feel like I know what works and what doesn’t. We’re living with the audience’.

Warp Films will celebrate its tenth anniversary at the Magna Centre on Saturday 17th November, with a live re-score of Dead Man’s Shoes by a collaboration of musicians including members of Clayhill and UNKLE, followed by DJ sets from Andrew Weatherall, Tom Ravenscroft, Pablo Clements and Shane Meadows.

Stay tuned to the Now Then Facebook page for the chance to win tickets to the event, as well as a number of other Warp Films related goodies.

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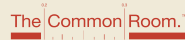
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FOOD.

RICE.
CASSIE KILL.

Risotto is a fantastic meal in the colder months. Short grain risotto rice varieties leak starch into a liquid base of wine and stock to give a viscous, creamy sauce. Some time and effort is required stirring the pan as the liquid is added, encouraging the starches to release and keeping the rice from sticking, but nevertheless it is a relatively quick and inexpensive dish to create. The addition of a combination of garlic, onion and a few choice vegetables can give a delicious result. I'd particularly recommend celery, courgette and sliced Jerusalem artichoke (see recipe) for a delicate, sweet and fragrant outcome. Many people assume cream is needed to give that wonderful richness, but I'd just stick to a knob of butter and handful of grated parmesan, stirred through right before serving to give just enough creaminess without turning it claggy.

Sushi provides another wonderful showcase for the joys of short grain rice. There are many expert tutorials for cooking sushi rice out there on the internet which can give you much more knowledge than I ever could. All I will say is that it isn't as hard as you might think. It is crucial to keep the lid on the pan as directed so the steam is trapped inside, helping the rice cook perfectly. You must add the seasoning of rice vinegar, sugar and salt to give the right flavour and gloss to the rice. Finally, spreading the rice thinly after cooking ensures it cools quickly and makes it easier to work with. Personally, I'd recommend giving some raw fish a try when making your own sushi, but if you aren't feeling brave enough, crunchy red pepper, cucumber and sliced omelette give a good vegetarian alternative.

The one short grain rice we do have a great historical relationship with here in the UK is pudding rice, but it is sadly undervalued these days. I don't think you can get a better wintery pudding than a rich creamy rice pudding with a hint of nutmeg and a dollop of syrup or jam. As the long nights draw in, why not warm your cockles with the comforting, carbohydrate rich joy of short grain rice in one of these sticky dishes.



JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE RISOTTO.

200g risotto rice per person (I use Arborio)
150g Jerusalem artichokes, peeled and finely sliced
2 sticks of celery, finely chopped
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 large courgette, sliced
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 small glass white wine (about 125ml)
1 tbsp olive oil
1 litre vegetable stock (two cubes)
50g grated parmesan
Knob of butter

Gently fry the onion and celery in the oil for a few minutes until softened. Add the garlic and the rice and stir on the heat for another minute or two, until the rice becomes translucent. Add the wine and stir well. Add the artichokes and courgette and a ladle of the stock. Simmer gently, stirring almost constantly until the stock is absorbed.

Continue adding the stock a ladle at a time and stirring throughout until the risotto is creamy and the rice has lost its crunch (between 20 and 30 minutes). Once you are happy with the consistency, do not add any more stock. Quickly stir through the butter and parmesan and serve immediately.



RICE PUDDING.

100g pudding rice
700ml milk
50g sugar
Nutmeg (to taste)
Jam or syrup (to serve)

Heat the oven to 150°C/Fan 130°C/Gas Mark 2. Wash the rice thoroughly and drain well. Grease a large baking dish with butter, then add the rice and sugar and stir in the milk. Grate a little nutmeg on top. Cook for two hours, stirring after 30 minutes and again after another 30 minutes, then leaving unstirred for a final hour. When it comes out it should be thick, creamy and delicious. Serve with a little drizzle of golden syrup or a blob of jam.

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Making the poor more obvious will boost nation's sense of privilege, claims Cameron

David Cameron has revealed a radical plan to help Britain's 'squeezed middle' experience a heightened sense of privilege and achievement.

Instead of looking up to the richest, the PM wants more to look down on the poorest, and realise just how relatively privileged they are.

"When people read about my private education and all the advantages I've had, it's easy to mistake that feeling of glowing admiration for one of bitter resentment", explained Cameron. "But if you look at it from my perspective, you're just an endless sea of fucking plebs."

"We need to build a level playing field, but one with more levels at the bottom."

Tory back benchers have given a warm welcome to the plan, which will highlight Britain's poorest by displaying them in skips. Equipped with hand-bells and filthy rags, the social lepers should draw big crowds, and make others realise they've never had it so good.

Cameron has pledged to keep the downtrodden firmly trampled, as a benchmark for relative prosperity.

"If you're frustrated with your lot, listen out for a homeless who jingles as he sobs", he suggested. "Remind yourself how well you're doing by saying 'there but for the grace of God stays he'."

With a continuing recession, there's no shortage of poor people for slightly less poor people to feel superior to. The educationally sub-useful in particular are prime candidates for a 'smuggling'.

"Some would have it that it takes a big man to see the wider economic picture, but it doesn't", insisted Cameron. "It takes a small man in a bin, wearing bells."

Nation develops amazing power to root out dead paedophiles

As more victims of dead sex pests give their evidence to the police, millions of Britons have noticed that they probably thought they were guilty all along.

Experts have claimed that such retrospective powers of detection could prevent past crimes going unpunished in the future.

Authorities are urging the public to look at a recent list of perverts, nod sagely at their weird eyes, and mutter 'I knew it, the dirty bastard'.

"Those with this special power should come forward and help us with our enquiries", urged Detective Blakely of the recently formed Obvious Crimes Unit. "Alternatively, just comment on how obvious it was in hindsight, whenever you get the chance."

The new powers of observation seem to be particularly honed amongst those who actually saw crimes being committed by celebrity nonces in their pre-dead state.

"Our team think there may be a correlation between witnessing a crime with your own two eyes, and then knowing at a later date that what they were doing was wrong", suggest Blakely. "For some reason, the link isn't always made until it's a threat to the witness's career."

While some celebrities are renowned for creeping the shit out of TV audiences, not every dead-eyed, bearded freak has been outed by their co-workers.

"There's still work to do in this area", acknowledged Blakely, "we think some may be evading justice by remaining alive. But with your help and the grim inevitability of mortality, they'll get theirs in the end."

In the meantime, Blakely is encouraging those that experience a hunch to cross-check their findings on Twitter.

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WORDLIFE.

COLLATED BY JOE KRISS.

It's been a great month for literature in Sheffield. Off The Shelf has been a roaring success and there's still a handful of fringe events left, with The Time Traveller's Guide to Elizabethan England on 24th November at the Showroom, and Stranger Magic with Marina Warner on 5th December at Sheffield Hallam University.

The reception from our online product has been overwhelming. 21 poets have been battling it out online in a digital poetry slam. As I write this the jury's still out on the winner, but it will be announced on 2nd November at Queens Social Club at our Off The Shelf closing party. You can see the digital poetry slam in the flesh and cast your vote at 21poetsfor Sheffield.com.

One prose piece and one poem from Manchester this month. Both Joe Daly and Richy Campbell are from over the Pennines. Since the launch of our sister publication Now Then Manchester last month, expect more Manchester writers to be passing through these pages. This month's Word Life also features Sheffield-based writer Andrew English with a poem about the birth of the internet. I'd completely forgotten about Netscape Navigator too. Hope you enjoy them. Don't forget you can post poems up on our forum and find up to date information about our events and the like on wordlife.co.uk.

As ever, keep submissions coming to joe@nowthenmagazine.com

JOE.

BUS.

My mum always used to say, 'Northerners get buses, Londoners get the train'.

I sat next to Paul Heaton on the bus. This seemed about right. That's where Paul Heaton would be. On a bus. With his face. He has a bus face. All northern and square.

My mum would have loved seeing Paul Heaton on a bus. He's the only famous person I've ever seen on any public transport. I did once see Fearn Cotton get into a taxi. Londoner. Just her. Driver in front and just her. In a taxi. With her face.

Paul Heaton wasn't reading a paper, or listening to headphones or jotting down notes. He was just sitting on the bus. Looking out of the window. Like he'd done it loads of times before. Like Paul Heaton just gets on a bus and rides it up and down. Manchester to Huddersfield to Sheffield. Wherever the bus goes. So does Paul Heaton.

Fearne Cotton just gets the taxi to where she's going. In London. West London to East London to North London to South London. Always London. Wherever Fearne Cotton goes, so does a taxi.

The bus was empty and I'd sat down right next to him. Just me and Paul with the whole top deck to ourselves. Sat next to each other. Paul Heaton moved seats. He seemed uncomfortable. I was hoping he'd felt comforted. Both of us, enjoying a nice bus ride. A nice northern bus ride. Next to each other. We'd been on the bus, together, for 15 minutes when he got out a notebook and wrote a sentence. I couldn't see what he wrote. He put the notebook away.

I began humming 'Happy Hour'. Quietly. I thought he'd appreciate the knowledge. Just allowing him that little smile. I could only see the back of his head but he seemed content. He'd got on a bus. A nice Northern bus. And a nice Northern man had sung his song. A theme tune for him, almost. Fearne Cotton could never get that in her taxi. No taxi driver was greeting her with the Fearne Cotton Radio 1 Jingle. They'd lose their tip. I had nothing to lose.

I was out to gain a friend. A famous friend. Who'd write songs about me. Me and Paul and our times on the buses of Manchester. It'd be a BBC show. BBC 4 at least. Repeated on BBC 2. Paul and Joe On The Buses. We'd ride around and meet people. Talk about how bus travel had changed. And just be pals. Pals on the buses.

Fearne Cotton's already got her pals. She doesn't need to meet them on the buses. She's closed herself off. Like Londoners do. That's what my mum said. They're grumpy in the South. I suppose they know enough people. So many people. Not like the north. We've got space for buses. Nice buses.

Paul Heaton stood up to get off. I hummed 'Happy Hour' louder. It caught his attention. Paul came up to me. He was smiling. He opened his mouth and in a deep Southern accent said, 'Sorry mate, I just look like him.' My heart sank. 'Nice bus though'. And Not Paul Heaton rang the bell and walked down the stairs.

JOE DALY.

THE RESTAURANT.

Through the window stand tables, in fours and twos; nearly-leather chairs on both sides, spot-lights broadcasting their sheen.

The boss tells the back-bent employee to mop, or wipe; to approach the seldom-there customers, hellos with a blown grass-reed voice.

To the left, a lone customer sits, spoon-picking at a sorbet, trying not to look to the left, at the bar, the faint chink of cutlery and polishing floats through the speechless air and seeps through the pane.

RICHY CAMPBELL.

THE NATIVES ARE RESTLESS.

I am just young enough to be an internet native. Not like those middle-aged women who pick up the mouse, move the mousemat, put down the mouse and continue until cord or desk run out. You don't see them any more. Or that old boy – do you remember? Typing a letter to his son In the address bar, while the waitress tutted? We had a new dawn of netscape navigator and virtual Irish pubs And waiting, and waiting, and eggtimer pixels.

Well, not quite native, but Learned at university, when we still had faith Before bubbles burst and pennies drop and The world is people who are scared and want things and bluff. Before this, when the people telling you how know how, and don't exist where you do.

Internet native used to be a buzzword. Young and thrusting. Now it is aging, and in a bit it will Become another thing old people say as those whose world it is smile, Like sidecar or foxtrot or twenty-three skidoo.

ANDREW ENGLISH.



MARK GRIST.

DEAD POETS AND RAP BATTLING.
INTERVIEW BY JOE KRISS.

Mark Grist is a poet, promoter and former teacher but also the unlikely public face for Don't Flop, the UK rap battle organisation, after his battle with 17 year old rapper Blizzard went viral. To date, he's had well over two million views and, since the video was released in December of last year, has toured the country with his Dead Poets show. We spoke to Mark about poetry, education, the trappings of his new found fame and future plans ahead of his appearance at our Varsity Slam event last month as part of Off the Shelf Literature Festival.

What started you writing?

I started writing at primary school. I used to write these long comedy ballads to crack my mates up. I was more into humorous poetry really – Roald Dahl, Dennis Lee.

What started you teaching?

I went really quickly into teaching after my degree. There was this new initiative that supposedly in five to ten years time there would be a lack of head teachers, so I went on this fast-track thing. We'd go on these weekend-long interviews with people from Eastenders playings kids. You'd never see an actual kid though.

I was really into teaching. I used to write poems for the students I taught. Education is very focused on a narrative, and isn't very focused on creativity. Just writing poems with students and mucking about with words felt really important, especially in Peterborough, where not much creative stuff was happening.

You're one of a few poets who write formal poetry, perform regularly and rap battle. Do you see poetry as being inclusive of all these things?

I've always found it kind of embarrassing how artists can feel about their work. Everyone tries to validate what they do. As a school teacher, if I have two kids that are being creative in one way that suits my personal palette, and another one that doesn't, it's my job to remove my personal palette and see the value of what both students make. The divisions that people put up about art can be really damaging and embarrassing. I think it makes people feel scared or threatened about other people's work.

Tell us about how the Don't Flop battle video came about.

I was very cynical initially about rap battle. I was still teaching at the time. I did a few locally and they ended up in our show. Rowan who runs Don't Flop came to see the Dead Poets show in Norwich, and he thought it'd be funny for me to get involved. The first battle I did got about 2,000 views, and then Blizzard wanted to do a battle, so Rowan suggested we go with the idea that I was a teacher and he was a student, so we went along and did it.

And it seemed the whole world turned on its head. Suddenly every producer and radio exec wanted to have a meeting. There was never any expectation that I'd become known for my rap battling, and to be honest I could have crashed and burned. I'm pretty much an advocate of rap battle now. It's incredibly clever. I mean, I can't compete lyrically with half the roster of Don't Flop. I think hip hop at the heart of it has got truth, and it's the same with poetry. I'm not tough or dangerous, but in battles I know that. If you're really honest about everything there's not a lot that people can hit you with.

It was getting to the point that overnight the video would gain 200,000 views. I'd been used to travelling for two hours to a pub to read to 12 people, and then travelling home and going to bed. All of a sudden you go to sleep and 200,000 have seen you perform, and they haven't seen all of the debilitating failures that you've had. It was just insane.

People think you're popping champagne, bouncing down the street in some car. There's no gin and juice. You spend two weeks not leaving your bedroom, because all of a sudden you've gone from getting a tweet a day to a thousand overnight. Google asked me to read in San Francisco at a staff party. Big Brother asked if I'd be interested in coming on. Rap battle has changed my life, but for about three weeks it made me feel really ill. You're terrified you've been launched really far and high too fast. I don't want everyone in four years time saying, "Mark Grist was that guy from the Blizzard battle". I'd like to do something else at some point.

What are you working on at the moment?

I'm about to have a rap battle at the weekend. I'm trying to beat someone without using the letter 'l'. I've prepped all my bars, with the hope no-one will realise I've only used four vowels and then reveal it at the end. I'm taking a new Dead Poets show to Edinburgh. I'm also working on a children's collection called The Truth About Big School, and some TV work that hopefully will be really big.

Have you got any advice for any young poets?

Always read, or see or hear more poetry. Always absorb more art than you create. The better the ratio, the better your work will be. I probably spent most of my life thinking I was a shit poet, and there's still a part of me that thinks that on a fairly regular basis, but that's not the end of the world. Do what you want to do, the way you want to do it. As long as it's got some truth to it, then carry on.

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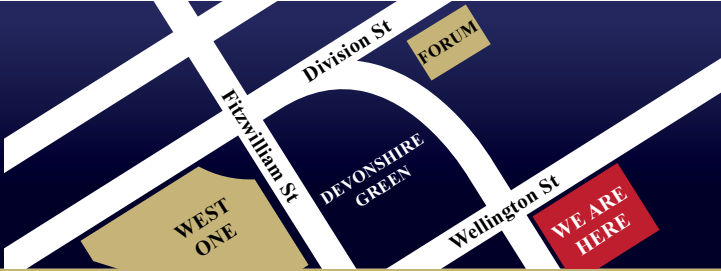
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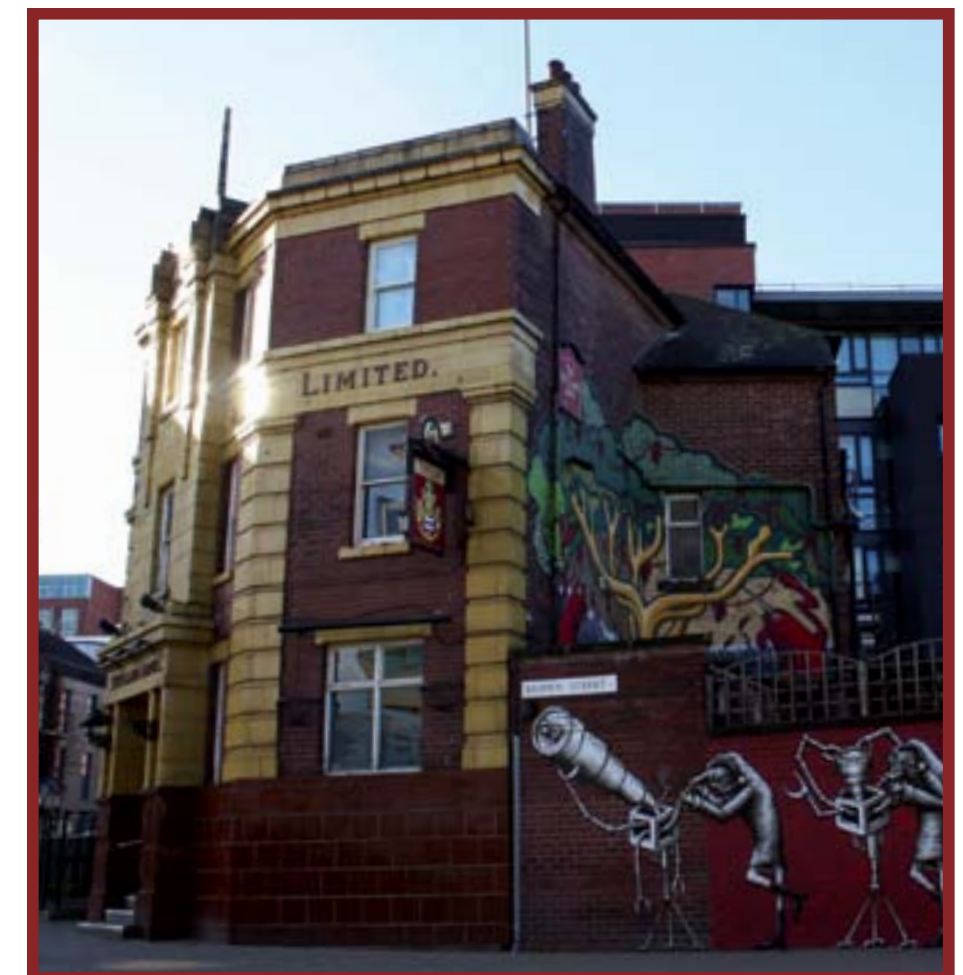
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FRANÇOIS RÉAU.

CHAOTIC SIMPLICITY.
INTERVIEW BY MATT JONES.

We didnt find Mr. Réau, he found us. I was at once struck by the strength of his work, a devotion to stripping away the unnecessary and still retaining emotional content.

The entire process of making art is laborious, time consuming and considered, but true art is an expression of something heartfelt, honest, and uninhibited, and the two often conflict. For me, it is this battle between the left and right hand sides of the brain where the most interesting work is made. I've really enjoyed looking at François's venture between order and chaos - not like anything else we've featured in our magazine, that much can be said.

What got you started as an artist?

Very early in life I practiced painting and plastic arts. I met several artists, saw many exhibitions with some major pieces which had a strong impact when I was a kid. My artistic path started quite early, around the age of 14, with courses and workshops at the Poitiers École des Beaux-Arts, and I just kept on painting and drawing. After my diploma in Applied Arts, I moved to Paris where I started my research into Plastics and Arts.

Can you describe your working processes?

In my artistic approach, regardless of the project I'm working on, I try to find plastics that suggest a certain intensity and give birth to an emotion. That implies going via a polymorphic production, because the answers are not always the same according to the subject.

When I paint I scratch, I erase with a fabric or with my hand, I often rub the canvas or the paper... so that the image often changes and goes through different stages. Even if a painting seems finished, sometimes I choose to forget it for a while and when I go back to it I sometimes partially or completely destroy it. This way of working can seem spontaneous or instinctive, but for me it's actually quite calculated.

Who or what are your biggest inspirations?

I have many inspirations and it's obviously hard to list them all. I still remember my state of shock when I first saw Monet's Nymphéas (Water Lillies) series at the age of 12. If I have to name a few, I will say the work of Cy Twombly, Sally Mann and Anselm Kiefer.

The pillars, which are the base of my work, are mainly humankind and its history - sociology, psychology, philosophy and several sciences... actually many things that surround me.

What tools and materials do you use regularly and which are your favourites?

For the drawing and the painting I'm quite classic. I mainly use oil paint, paper and canvas. I like these materials very much because I like the plasticity of the paint. Regarding the installations, I mainly use simple materials, recycled products or found items like coal, corn or wood.

How do you spend your days?

A day of work is made of different steps. It can start with some study work such as drawings and drafts. Then I need a documentation phase - web, books, magazines - to help me to find clues or starting points. When I'm in my workshop, I produce. It's a quite large, bright and calm space. Perfect to paint for long hours.

Which of your recent pieces have you been most happy with?

In a way, I think all the pieces I've made are interesting and I'm happy I produced them. They create a whole but also have their own story to tell. The work I like very much at the moment is the Traversées installation, because I did it on-site in quite a short time. It's quite an intense and deep piece of art. As well the Penumbra series, Marsh or Laurus Nobilis are key elements of my work. They all allowed me to climb a new step.

How has your art changed since you first started out?

For sure my art has changed during my life. I used to work with acrylic; I'm almost always using oil now. On top of that, my work was very colourful, but now I'm trying to say more with less. I like this search of economy in order to go straight to the point. My philosophy of work has also changed according to the people I have worked with.

What are you working on at the moment?

At the moment I'm working on a few different things. One work in progress is a landscape inspired work based on graphite on paper. I'm also working on a series of oil on canvas for an upcoming exhibition.

Do you have any advice for up-and-coming artists?

You need a lot of work, curiosity and dedication.



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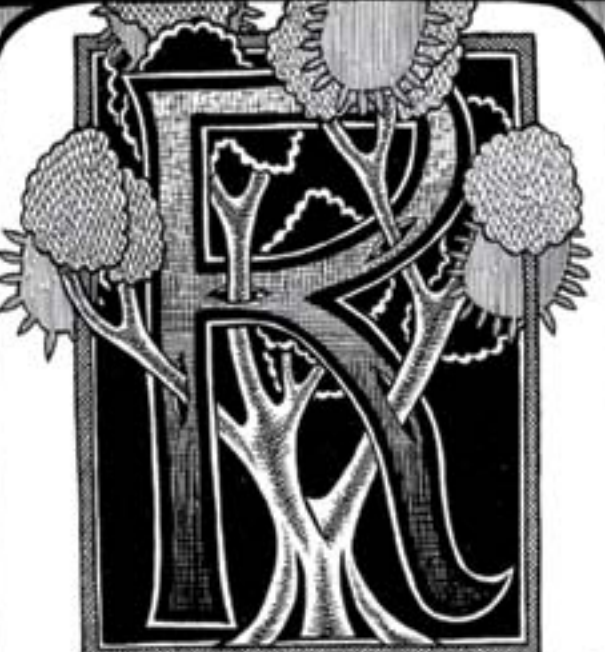
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THE DYING ART OF CRATE DIGGING.
JOE BAKER.

As music production becomes more and more accessible, and at a time when it seems music is at a crossroads between older, sample based styles, and newer, synth orientated sounds, even casual music listeners are becoming more and more interested in the roots of the music they love.

The internet makes it easy to discover where that jazzy bass line originally came from, or which obscure 70s funk band those drums were sampled from. In a way this is a great thing, because it re-introduces the art of sampling to a newer, possibly less interested generation, raised on tinny, factory sound bank snares.

What I don't like about it is the extent to which it opens up the identity of what were previously rare and sacred records; hidden gems of musical history. I have very happy memories of the first time I heard David Porter's 'I'm Afraid the Masquerade is Over', and the numerous samples that lay within. I had been given a box of 45's by a family friend who knew I was into record collecting, and, not knowing the value, I received a priceless box of absolute nuggets.

I put the record on the turntable, and sat back. The instantly recognisable hiss and crackle of the aged vinyl played out of the speakers for what could have been the first time in many a year. Little did I know that over the next few minutes, I would be jumping around in excitement, looking at my friends' amazed faces like we'd just found buried treasure. I won't spoil it for those of you who might want to check out the track, but straight away an instantly recognisable sample greeted our eardrums. It was a precious few moments as the familiar piano keys and base line played those few seconds which, thousands of miles away, and over 15 years earlier, had obviously excited someone else so much that they went and looped it up.

We sat there for a few minutes, amazed at what we had just heard. Not one, not two, but three samples we recognised. What else did the shoebox of wax have in store for us?

The David Porter track itself isn't a classic piece of music in my opinion, but it's what it represents that inspires me to write this. If someone were to search for one of the sampled tracks online, they might well get just as excited as me and my friends did, but they will know it's coming. That feeling of connecting the dots as you listen – like a face you recognise but don't know exactly where from – can't be replicated, and the art of record collecting and sample searching – digging through hours of terrible music just to find a kick, a snare or a loop – is lost a little more.

Keep digging people! Those charity shops have got gems just waiting to be found...

Joe Baker, a.k.a Zeeni, is a DJ born and bred in Sheffield. He runs a monthly night at The Harley called Vibes & Stuff.

@Vibes_andStuff / Search 'Vibes and Stuff' on Facebook

RICHARD HAWLEY.

23RD SEPTEMBER.
CITY HALL.

REVIEWER – SAM WALBY.

It’s hard writing about Richard Hawley for a publication based in his home town. The man attracts almost unwavering fandom in South Yorkshire. Not without good cause of course, but personally I found his latest offering **Standing at the Sky’s Edge** a bit underwhelming – particularly when laid side by side with the sublime **Coles Corner** – as did our reviewer in Now Then #50.

Before I continue, however, I should mention the support provided by Irish folk singer Lisa Hannigan, backed by John Smith on guitar and a drummer whose name I forget, but whose playing was equally well-balanced. The performance was filled with subtle, understated, jazz-inflected original folk songs, some taken from Hannigan’s most recent album **Passenger**, culminating in a beautifully hushed adaptation of The Band’s ‘The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down’, dedicated to the late drummer Levon Helm.

Although Hawley’s newest record is certainly not my favourite, some of his new tracks sounded really tight in a live setting, particularly one as illustrious as the City Hall’s Oval Hall. The set opener and title track ‘Standing at the Sky’s Edge’ packed far more punch than its studio counterpart, and ‘Don’t Stare At The Sun’ glistened with psychedelia, particularly in the melodic chorus. Likewise, ‘Leave Your Body Behind You’ and ‘Down In The Woods’, the two singles from the new album, were delivered with real panache by a band who are clearly at the top of their game.

Extended guitar solos can often be a turnoff for me, but coming from such an effortlessly superlative guitarist they are a joy to behold. In between songs he regaled the audience with his opinions on various topics, such as MP3s (‘the technical equivalent of fuck all’) and his early life growing up in the city (‘I’m still just a speccy lad from Pitsmoor’).

Other highlights included the mellow ‘Remorse Code’ and, after a standing ovation, the double encore of ‘Water Boy’, a cover of a Paul Robeson song that he dedicated to his grandfather, and ‘The Ocean’, probably one of his finest songs to date. A shower of enthusiastic applause accompanied his exit, and quite rightly – a fantastic homecoming performance that temporarily blew away the cobwebs of cynicism within me.

WAREHOUSE PROJECT.

6TH OCTOBER.
VICTORIA WAREHOUSE, MANCHESTER.

REVIEWER – IAN PENNINGTON.

Here we are again, another autumn chill bringing with it all the usual ingredients: yellows, oranges, browns, bare branches, frosty stillness, hibernators fervently fetching their hoards and Manchester’s Warehouse Project. The WHP, like the furry woodland creatures of wintry dormancy, has found a new home. This stone labyrinth resembles a hybrid of the low-roofed tunnel system of the recently departed Store Street car park venue and the high-ceilinged open expanse of the old Boddingtons Brewery where it all began.

At first it seems like a rabbit burrow, opening out to a main chamber where the night’s curators, critically hyped duo SBTRKT, bring the curtain down. When their rendition of ‘Right Thing To Do’ rings out, it bookends thousands of preceding contorted grins and glimpses to the sky. Earlier on, Disclosure’s trademark line-drawn face stares out across the same room as the pair produce a set of twitchy Mount Kimbie-esque samples tweaked towards sole-shaking bass and blissfully dubbed out techno. By the end, that seems a distant memory, but WHP deals in marathons, not sprints. En route, TNGHT’s bassy pulses bleed across the room and Four Tet twists ten minutes of splice and shuffle into a sudden constriction as bassline vibrations engulf and dictate airflow, force-feeding references to **There Is Love In You** and beyond.

The intervals and smaller rooms are largely left to the whim of the Hoya:Hoya team. Jonny Dub and Illum Sphere share deck duty, dropping anything from rock to reggae, drum and bass to soul and jazz, fitting in an ‘Idioteque’ nod towards the night’s Manchester Arena headliners Radiohead. Incidentally, the rumours abound of Thom Yorke bringing his records bag along seem wide of the mark. Two other Hoya:Hoya affiliates, Krystal Klear and Lone, between them manage to illuminate a flaw of competing decibel levels in close proximity. The latter’s quieter lulls are picked off by the former’s eardrum thudders next door, although with Lone’s tech synth intensity raised they’re an even match.

Dan Snaith, of the Arena’s support band Caribou, does spin some records ahead of his Daphni project’s debut record release, although the standout in Room Two happens earlier on. Koreless uses steady builds by layering echoing vocal blips over synthetic soundscapes, later leading to ambient organ sample breaks which fade to near silence before a denser, string-led crescendo.

People saunter out into a misty morning, clearing the colony’s airways to breathe without rhythm once more.

VERITY SUSMAN.

6TH OCTOBER.
LANTERN THEATRE.

REVIEWER – PETE MARTIN.

The Lantern Theatre is always a special place to attend a show, whether it be a pantomime, play or gig. Its capacity of only 84 lends any show an immediate intimacy, so it is disappointing to see the venue only half full to witness two of the most innovative solo performers around at the moment.

Sheffield’s own Ruth O’Hare is a shy, self-conscious performer who has always felt more comfortable with nature and animals, with whom she has a deep fascination. Playing under her nom de plume Oxo Foxo, Ruth kneels on stage dressed in an animal hood and slowly builds vocal loops into haunting, soaring songs. She occasionally uses pre-recorded rhythms and vocals, but it is mostly her angelic live vocals that she uses so effectively to create her otherworldly tableaux. The two cover versions (Peter Frampton’s ‘Baby I Love Your Way’ and Whigfield’s ‘Saturday Night’) are genuine, heartfelt performances, rather than being kitschy or ironic.

Verity Susman formerly played guitar and keyboards in Electralane, the Brighton-based experimental band on hiatus since 2007, although they did play a few gigs in Australia earlier this year. Her solo performances have included recent shows with the Raincoats and Atlas Sound, performing at the Tate Modern plus an upcoming slot at the John Cage celebration. Such is her pedigree.

For this performance she dons a handlebar moustache, a nod to the fifth anniversary of La Moustache Festival in Berlin, presenting themes of subverted gender and female masculinity which prove both humorous and awkward. The first piece has Susman on tenor saxophone producing various grunts, squeaks and squawks, looped to create a cacophonous though rhythmic soundscape. The following pieces are cut-ups performed on Korg, pedals and saxophone - a bewildering collage of melody, invention and alienation.

Susman places as much emphasis on the visual as on the aural, and the backdrop, created by Jack Barraclough, features a dizzying mix of repeating images - male bodybuilders with saxophones for genitalia, Amazonian women with pneumatic breasts - all amplifying and distorting the provocative text voiced in the computerised spoken word segments.

The audience watches in rapt silence, even when the moustache falls to the floor, though this is met with a wry smile by Susman. This is a confident, assured multimedia performance with an abundance of ideas colliding and mostly succeeding. A definite must-see next time around.

LISTINGS.

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The days are getting colder, the nights are getting longer and our listings blurbs are getting considerably shorter. Here’s what’s on in November.

THE HOT POT.

6th November / Nottingham House / Free.

The legendary Sequoia crew announced the return of The Hot Pot last month. The whole of Sheffield instantly dropped what it was doing and squeezed into The Notty House for a night of the very finest roots, ragga, dutty dubs and balkan beats. NB: Hot Pot is not on sale at this event.

DUB PISTOLS.

10th November / Plug / £10 adv.

If you went to a festival this summer, chances are you caught Barry Ashworth and his band of merry men. It’s certainly no coincidence that Dub Pistols consistently get voted one of the best live acts in the country. This is a guaranteed roof-raising.

STEALING SHEEP.

13th November / Harley / £6 adv.

Semi Detached push the boat out once more by showcasing the musical flavourings of this all-girl Liverpool three-piece. Think glitchy percussion, gossamer-light harmonies, analogue synths and eclectic, hurdy-gurdy textures.

NEW YORK BRASS BAND.

17th November / Fox & Duck / Free.

Cool Beans celebrates two years of nonsense by inviting everyone’s favourite party starters The NYBB back down to Sheffield for a free gig in the newly refurbished Fox & Duck. Also featuring an exclusive DJ set from the notorious Ham Pocket. This could get raucous.

ROBIN INCE.

27th November / Lantern Theatre / £15 adv.

Robin continues his comic exploration into the human condition with his latest show, Happiness Through Science. Fresh from the success of The Infinite Monkey Cage and The Uncaged Monkeys Tour with Professor Brian Cox, this will be a real treat for fans of science and comedy alike.

MUSIC IN THE ROUND: DJANGO BATES’ BELOVED.

29th November / Crucible Lyceum Studio / £15 adv.

The Crucible are hosting a number of fantastic Music in the Round events throughout the month of November, this one focusing on the works of Django Bates and the late, great Charlie Parker.



GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR.

ALLELUJAH! DON'T BEND! ASCEND!
CONSTELLATION RECORDS.

REVIEWER – ALEX ADAMS.

It's been ten long years since we last had anything physical from apocalypse rockers Godspeed You! Black Emperor, and what with the political climate at the moment, songs about everything going to shit could fit in nicely. That isn't to say Godspeed are all about doom. Previous works have managed to weave immense beauty and intimacy into their expansive soundscapes too. Yet for the opener to this album, 'Mladic', they opt for sheer anger. The song holds some real weight with Eastern-style wailing violins mixed with growling guitars and furious drumming. It's a song that demands attention and acceptance that this isn't just a reformation for the band, but a resurrection. But for all its roaring and screams, it lacks that expansiveness that elevates Godspeed to such high praise. It feels rather insular; less of a musical journey through desolation and more one long battle cry.

In stark contrast, the second "major" track 'We Drift Like Worried Fire' is a gently building crescendo of genuine joy and triumph. Different movements change up the pace and add variety, yet for all the rare sense of positivity that the song creates, it too often strays into the blandness and guitar-noodling that dragged down their previous album **Yanqui U.X.O.** and made it feel so weak compared to their explosive earlier works.

The last two songs on the album – coming on a separate 7" vinyl – are quintessential drone and yet somehow tragically forgettable. 'Their Helicopters Sing' is one long demonic orchestra tune-up. 'Strung Like Lights at Thee Printemps Erable' – yeah, I have no idea either – has more of a bite to it with some added distortion but still ends up coming up short. These two tracks aren't especially bad but they lack any kind of punch or depth past the harsh noise. The expansiveness of previous albums is sorely missing.

One of the main problems I have with this album is that the main bulk of it isn't even new. 'Mladic' and 'We Float...' have been part of setlists since 2003, before the band went on hiatus. The drone tracks are the only new material we get, and they feel so limited, lacking the glorious vastness that Godspeed can create, that upon first listen the album seems slightly disappointing. But there is potential here; new sounds, new approaches. Godspeed may be on the brink of a transformation. This album may be the start of something much bigger and louder than before. I hope so.



LEETHERETTE.

FEATURETTE.
NINJA TUNE.

REVIEWER – JACK SCOURFIELD.

Cast your mind back, if you will, to 2010 – a time when dinosaurs roamed the earth, human beings only had one large eye in the middle of their face, and it was customary for townsfolk to be burned at the stake for being upbeat about the state of British sport. A year that saw student unrest sweep the country and BP take a huge steaming dump in the Gulf of Mexico before sloppily wiping their behinds with a dead cormorant. Despite all this, 2010 will undoubtedly live longest in the collective memory due to my review of Letherette's eponymous debut EP in the November issue of this very magazine.

Exactly two years on, Letherette are back with what is now their third EP and their first for Ninja Tune. Despite retreating to a mountain top monastery in Guam shortly after the last article was published and swearing never again to review EPs by Wolverhampton duos, I have once again returned to face the inevitability of my destiny after Now Then's editor bribed me back to UK shores with a combination of Ryman's vouchers and Weetos.

So, the verdict? Not mind-blowing, but it's still pretty good. While I was holed away in Guam, the duo appear to have spent their time hanging out at mid-90s Parisian nightclubs and Chicago dancefloors circa 1987. Opening track 'Warstones' is much more overtly dancey than their previous outings, sounding not dissimilar to early Daft Punk but retaining Letherette's characteristic chopped vocal flecks, although it lacks a certain edge and could easily be filed away with any other disco resurgence track of the same ilk. 'Ettewards' is better, muffled rave piano stabs propped up by a veteran 4/4 beat, with soulful snatches of vocals strewn across them.

In the best sense possible, 'Surface' sounds like a bonus track from Kuedo's **Severant**, a gentle whirl of drums underlying a twinkling melody, while the collaborative partnership of Jed and Lucia half-sing, half-sigh over the top. Final track 'Wecko' is a charmingly spaced slice of Brainfeeder-esque beatsmanship, incorporating chimes and an array of found sounds to firmly banish any troublesome worries to the naughty step for a 4:36 minute time out.

Overall, Letherette's third offering does their reputation no harm at all, but nor does it advance it in any great way. It is slightly too forgettable as a whole. This could be partly due to their shift from the comfortably obscure Ho Tep imprint to the more 'mainstream independent' Ninja Tune, where risks are likely to be more scrutinised. By me. Two years from now, when they're readying their debut LP for Simon Cowell's Syco label, I'll see you back on these pages for round three. But for now – one ticket to Guam please madam.



GREAT DEEDS.

DISASTROCHIMP.
SELF RELEASED.

REVIEWER – ALAN BYATT.

Disastrochimp is the new EP by Sheffield-based trio Great Deeds, who thrive within a world of chaotic guitar riffs, jaunty bass lines, and jazzy time signatures. They take influence from a variety of sub genres – math rock, progressive, post-punk and post-hardcore – to conjure up a cacophony of sound through high-speed tempos and battling instrumentation.

Since the early 70s Sheffield's music scene has flourished through its alternative outlook with the help of such bands as Cabaret Voltaire, Artery, and Heaven 17, who took creativity from such anti-establishment movements as avant-garde and dada. Although Great Deed's influences might have changed, the prospect of creating do-it-yourself, impulsive music remains, owing as much to the environment as to the artists themselves.

Opening track 'Bulb' steers its way through ringing feedback building to galloping drum beats and frantic guitar riffs. This chaotic approach continues with 'Tongue', a cross between post-hardcore At The Drive-In and math rock Everything Everything, with anxious vocals and stop-start motions. While the band's notable math rock aesthetics are all perfectly in line with their atypical rhythm structures and clean tones, their rawness and energy hints as punk ideals. These elements are all mathematically placed to give us such systematic and electric compositions as 'Leger', boasting a tight and heavy rhythm section and perhaps their biggest chorus.

'Blueprint' has a sparse musical nature compared to the other tracks, with thin sounding guitar lines and a non-committal vocal range. 'Brick' continues to manipulate the post-punk basslines best likened to that of Gang Of Four and mirrors the complex rhythm sections of Battles. The track also carries the weighting of the disjointed strangeness from the likes of DEVO, a band who similarly refuse to take themselves too seriously, but moulds this into their own form of weirdness with angular melodies and progressive edges.

Disastrochimp continues to develop from Great Deeds first EP **Teach Yourself Jazz-Punk Volume 1**, freeing their eclectic influences and ideas and allowing them to move freely through their own creativity, an opportunity that only such unconventional ideals can bring. This EP works best when listened to as a complete piece of work, allowing the time for Great Deeds to draw you into their world for 14 minutes of eccentricity.



SQUAREHEAD.

ELEGANTE.
SANDSEVEN.

REVIEWER – BEN DOREY.

Squarehead has become such a regular playing around Sheffield and the UK over the past two years it's easy to forget that he is only 19 years old. With releases on several labels already behind him and tracks getting played on prime time shows on Radio 1 by the likes of Skream and Toddla T, his understanding of the nuances of house music surpasses most of those 20 years his senior who were there the first time around. His new 12" double A-Side is being released as the first vinyl for new Sheffield label Sandseven and is a perfect showcase for his style – warm, subtle and swaggering in equal measure.

Opener 'Elegante' commences with the smart kind of vocal work you expect these days from Squarehead over filtered 909 kicks and jacking percussion, before being undercut dramatically with a subtly out-of-key bass that changes the mood and makes the introduction of woozy analogue pads at the drop all the better. Like many of the man's productions, this is deceptive, sounding like simple music until you think about what's going on and realise how rich it is, with layer upon layer of rhythm and melody evolving constantly rather than dropping in an obvious way.

'Now is Good' continues in a similar vein, the whole track hanging around vocals carefully chopped up and applied rhythmically, hypnotically overlapping as the tune develops. This one has another raw sounding bass line sitting under all the playful melodic elements, appropriately carrying an echo of LFO and seminal Warp Records tracks amongst more obvious influences from London and Chicago.

This is an incredibly mature release that will hopefully confirm to the rest of the UK what we in Sheffield already know – that Squarehead will go on to be one of the most talented producers in the current resurgence of UK house music. Go grab it.



SUBMOTION ORCHESTRA.

LEEDS-BASED LIVE ELECTRONIC 7-PIECE TALK TO NOW THEN.
INTERVIEW BY ADAM PUNZANO.

Submotion Orchestra emerged out of a project that founders Tommy Evans and DJ/producer Dom ‘Ruckspin’ Howard worked together on at York Minster Cathedral. This project, mixing classical music and dubstep, lit a spark which culminated in Tommy and Dom handpicking some of their favourite musicians with the intention of developing a distinct sound out of their diverse musical influences and backgrounds.

The initial intention, to “bridge the gap between bass driven electronic dance music and acoustic jazz music”, has progressed through an unpredictable process of experimentation. With a common love of jazz holding their often competing creative sensibilities together, they have managed to create a sound that includes aspects of each of their musical personalities, amounting to a fusion of funk, soul, dubstep and ambient electronica.

Having just returned from playing a summer of festivals, they have embarked on a UK tour bringing their newly released album *Fragments* to audiences up and down the country, including *The Tuesday Club* at *The Leadmill* last month. Now Then caught up with Submotion co-founder and drummer Tommy ahead of this performance.

For those who are unfamiliar with Submotion, could you tell us a little about yourself and the development of the band over the past four years?

The very first project was myself and Dom performing at York Minster Cathedral in 2008, where we were approached to write the music for an Arts Council commission. It was a slightly odd event and quite chaotic, very badly run and not particularly rewarding but it got us thinking about the possibility of live dubstep and about starting a live electronic project. It went from there really, and we started asking various people to come and jam to try out some of our initial ideas. So it started as an improvised project and grew, starting as one thing and ending up as something completely different, which is great. That’s it in a nutshell.

You have spoken before about the contrasting musical styles within Submotion which often result in a process of exploration and compromise when developing your music. Could you tell us more about this process? Do you think this could be a key factor in the evolution of your sound?

Yeah, I think it probably does have something to do with that. It’s great to have so many different opinions and so many different outlooks on music, because we all come from different backgrounds. We are all trained musicians but within that there is a lot of difference. Everyone brings their own ideas, their own style and their own outlook. That blend of ideas is crucial to what makes our sound what it is, although it does have its drawbacks, as it’s very difficult to get everyone to agree on what direction to take.

Do you think this is reflected in your most recent release, *Fragments*?

I think it is a pretty good representation of the contrasting musicians, and what’s interesting about it is that the first album was a much more one dimensional approach, in that myself and Dom wrote the whole album. It was very much in our heads already. The second album is a lot more collaborative and has been created through much more of a free process. There are so many different styles and so many different ideas but we feel like it is very cohesive. We worked towards an album as opposed to 12 different tracks and I think it is very diverse. You could call it an electronic album, you could call it a jazz album, you could call it club music. There is a lot of variation and what that leads to is a real diversity in our audience. For example, kids come down [to the live shows], but their parents come down as well, and that’s something we’re really proud of.

What response have you got so far on tour?

Most of the dates have sold out or been really well attended, which is encouraging. We knew it would do fairly well, as we now have a solid fan base and compared to when we released our first album a lot more people know about us. The album also went to number one in the electronic charts and although you can get to number one quite easily, staying there is rare. As we did that for ten days it was a big confidence boost.

Which festivals were highlights for you this summer?

This summer Outlook was amazing. It was absolutely chucking it down for an hour and a half before we went on stage but stopped five minutes before we came on, so loads of people came and we played and it was great. We had a very similar experience at a festival in Slovakia this summer, where there were huge thunderstorms which added a bit more drama. Other than that we have mainly played smaller British festivals. It’s been a great year.

Have you got any thoughts on the direction you might take for your next album? Could we expect a move towards incorporating more instruments or possibly collaborating with orchestras or choruses?

We have got a lot of irons in the fire, a lot of things that could come into fruition next year. Although it is early stages yet, we are hoping to begin working with some dance companies and theatre companies and hopefully we can branch out like that.

We are hoping to put an album out at the end of next year. The music industry moves so quickly that you have to keep putting music out in order to, not stay ahead of anyone else, but to keep people interested. We are quite keen to put out albums every year and see how far we get. Next year is pretty well set out for us already as we will be touring Europe in February/March and recording an album, touring over the summer and will hopefully put out the album at the end of the year, but we’ll see what happens.

submotion.co.uk

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BRIGHT LIGHT, BRIGHT LIGHT

TUE 20TH NOV / PLUG LIVE AT THE HARLEY
JUAN ZELADA
MARK NICHOLS

TUE 20TH NOV
NETSKY LIVE

FRI 23RD NOV / PLUG LIVE AT THE GREAT GATSBY
GOODNIGHT LENIN

SAT 24TH NOV
ADAM ANT
AND THE GOOD, THE MAD & THE LOVELY POSSE

SAT 24TH NOV / SHUFFLE PRESENTS
THE BLACKOUT (LIVE)

MON 26TH NOV / PLUG LIVE AT SOYO
BEING THERE

THU 29TH NOV
BEN OTTEWELL
LITTLE GEM

FRI 30TH NOV
LETZ ZEP

SAT 1ST DEC
SAM AND THE WOMP

MON 3RD DEC / PLUG LIVE AT SOYO
JACK MARTELLO

FRI 7TH DEC
ALVAREZ KINGS + DARKE HORSE
TWIN BEARS + SOUR CHERRY + THE ENCOUNTERS + NATHANNA

SUN 9TH DEC
MADEON

MON 10TH DEC / PLUG LIVE AT SOYO
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FILMREEL.

STORYTELLING / ANNA KARENINA.

STORYTELLING.

JOÃO PAULO SIMÕES.

Let me tell you a story. A story of solid friendship and kindred spirits. A story that comes in pairs, as it concerns two friends, two books, two film producers, two feature-length films and two not-so-long gone literary minds.

We were under the silvery light of Lisbon – the very same that gives a sharp, sizzling contour to my skin as I type this article into my smart phone – when my close friend, the actor Luís Correia Carmelo, borrowed my copy of Hermann Hesse’s **Steppenwolf**. This was the year that preceded my departure to England and as I’d been raving about it in an utterly egotistical way, he perhaps wanted to discern the aspects of the central character that most strikingly coincided with my spiritual condition.

Years elapsed and as I developed what was to be my second Portuguese language film, **Ausências de Espírito** (Absences of Mind, 2005), it made sense to involve Luis, who had been so instrumental in my artistic development. The paradox lay in the fact that by then he had turned his back on conventional acting and had become a very much in-demand storyteller.

My approach to filmmaking as a medium which does not rely strictly on storytelling was affirming itself and this was the film that I selected to make this outrageous statement. Divided into faintly connected segments, the film introduces an absurdist tale conceived and told to camera by Luis. This ironic device was to be repeated and improved upon in **Águas Furtadas e Outras Ausências** (Stolen Waters and Other Absences, 2007). The filming of this second instalment in the trilogy coincided with the perusal and borrowing of my good friend’s copy of Tonino Guerra’s **Il Poverone - Storie per una Notte Quieta** and the tacit agreement that if he wanted it back, he had to travel to Sheffield to collect it, since I had to go all the way to Évora to regain possession of **Steppenwolf**.

Poverone is a collection of transcendental short stories by the screenwriter of **L’Avventura** (1960), **L’Eclisse** (1962), **Blow-Up** (1966) and **Zabriskie Point** (1970). In other words, the man responsible for reshaping the way we look at character and psychological context in modern cinema. This particular book has become a teaching tool in sporadic private Portuguese lessons I give and the source of much linguistic delight, as favoured by a particular student, who happens to be a successful British film producer, but is, above all, a wonderful human being.

Something definitely connects Tonino Guerra and my grandfather, the poet Maurício de Almeida Gomes. They were both remarkable storytellers of unexpected tales that were infused with tradition, obscure folklore and enlightening in their assessment of the human condition. Yet one became a prolific screenwriter, while the other cut short his literary output in order to protect his family from a displeased secret police during the Portuguese Fascist Regime.

Those acquainted with the aforementioned (or other) films scribed by Guerra may or may not struggle to understand why he is a remarkable storyteller. I would say that the appreciation of his oeuvre relies entirely on the viewer’s expectations of what the purpose of cinema should be. Most viewers do expect a film to tell a story within vaguely predefined parameters. What you get from Guerra, by means of Michelangelo Antonioni’s vision, is an awareness; a sense that a story can unfold gradually (if not to say abstractly) and just around the corner of a physical or spiritual journey.

The inability to connect, the moral implications of our actions and the existential unease mirrored in the surroundings can all be found in his work. If my grandfather’s decision to turn his back on his writings enabled my filmmaking (in the grander scheme of things), Guerra’s groundbreaking approach paved the way to my very own narrative journeys.

A final look back at the preceding paragraphs, sentences, words whilst sitting in the transitional limbo of an airport, surrounded by anonymous faces, voices and exposed habits; people that carry stories larger than their hand luggage... All bringing me to one last thought: as long as it involves human beings, film will always tell a story. But it should be free to do so in every (in)conceivable way.

capturafilmes.blogspot.co.uk

ANNA KARENINA.

DIRECTOR – JOE WRIGHT.

REVIEWER – ALEX MURRAY.

When my girlfriend cheated, I suddenly saw the edges of love, the bits where it wasn’t, the world outside. **The Truman Show** taught us that a world with edges isn’t worth living in. In **Anna Karenina**, Leo Tolstoy’s story of pre-revolutionary Russia, you can see the limits of the old order, and that’s why it must end. Anna (Keira Knightley) and Count Vronksy (art toyboy Aaron Taylor-Johnson) embody the coming tumult with an affair that smashes through the scenes of propriety, exposing them as façades.

Director Joe Wright and writer Tom Stoppard’s adaptation reduces the action to a contrived spectacle, halting extras mid-dance to show the solipsism of Anna and Vronsky’s passion. Actors exit scenes by stumbling backstage. Everyone seems on the verge of singing. Reality, where it occurs, stands out: the Walking Dead gore of a disemboweled railway worker; PETA-baiting real fur costumes; the mating-slug shock of Keira and Aaron’s snogs. A fetish for stagecraft cheats us of the illusion of cinema.

We don’t like cheaters. If the man is a dirty dog, it’s the woman we can’t forgive. As Kristen Stewart can attest, a woman’s reputation is her livelihood. Anna is a modern woman, recklessly selfish in a way only men are allowed. Women are social bodies, or they are nothing, but Anna’s humanity is just too big to fit her destiny.

Love is a body rupturing the elaborate costumes and meticulous sets. Anna self-medicates on desire, her fall from grace measured in inches of exposed shoulders and the distracting wonkiness of Vronsky’s moustache. The aftermath of cheating is a new world where the end of love is always possible. I can live with it, but Anna throws herself under the locomotive of history, becoming a martyr for a new way of loving. Tellingly, Keira’s bankable face remains intact.

All the men here are Movember hipsters, even Frou-Frou the crimped stallion. Are we being sold looks for autumn/winter ’13? Keira, face of Chanel, seems cursed with actress/model interchangeability. As in perfume ads, here she finds herself striding meaningfully through the rooms of listed buildings, discarding haute couture.

Anna Karenina is realism rewritten for celebrity culture. Instead of gazing, we graze in an act of transubstantiation that repackages ponderable art as consumable commodity. This is Prog Cinema, pompous and metatextual, wantonly anachronistic like the period it portrays, demanding to be dispelled by the Johnny Rotten shriek of modernity.

viennafamous.wordpress.com





THE SHEAF VIEW.
25 GLEADLESS ROAD.
0114 249 6455.

For most pub goers worth their salt, The Sheaf needs no introduction. Regularly cited as one of the best pubs in Sheffield, it is the light at the end of the tunnel for many a hard worker, with ‘Sheaf Sunday’ having become a popular trend in recent years. People happily make the journey across the city every day of the week to enjoy its fine beverages.

It is hard to sum up what makes this ale house so special in so few words. On first impression it looks like your average traditional pub, with a spacious conservatory and generous garden. But The Sheaf has that ineffable, indefinable quality that all pubs strive for years to foster: real atmosphere. Pop your head in on any given evening and you will see a surprisingly wide range of punters. It’s rare for a pub to attract students, 20 and 30-somethings, families, seasoned ‘tickers’ and retirees in almost equal measure.

But The Sheaf’s legendary status is more than just hyped-up word of mouth and there is a reason its reputation precedes it. Its rotating selection of ales covers a lot of ground, geographically and in terms of taste, while the mainstays like Easy Rider and Acorn continue to fly out. The staff always go above and beyond – never seeming like they would prefer to be somewhere else, a pet hate we all share. In summer the beer garden is buzzing with lively conversation and generously flowing cider; in winter the interior is warm and cozy, with hearty sandwiches and pork pies on hand. Spirits are not neglected either, with a wide and reasonably priced range always available, and the only lagers served are quality ones. Smokers are treated to a covered smoking area, well behaved dogs are permitted and an atmosphere of good humour and wit is so prevalent that it may inexplicably be soaked into the very walls.

It is indeed difficult to nail down the unique charm of this award-winning pub. Those who have never been might read this article with cynicism, but those who have will be nodding their head in agreement to most of the above. Quite simply, The Sheaf is an institution in the proper sense of the word, and one that will remain for many, many years to come.



PARTY FOR THE PEOPLE.
PARTYFORTHEPEOPLE.ORG.UK
FACEBOOK.COM/PFTPESTMXXII

Everyone loves music, and we daresay a lot of people reading this love a good party. We are spoilt for choice for gigs and events in Sheffield, particularly at this time of the year, so it’s great that someone is thinking about how we can give something back while simultaneously having a ruddy good time.

Party For The People aims to raise money for local and national charities through music events and other recreational activities going on across the city. Many of us attend events every week, with a door tax usually proportionate to the calibre of the live acts or performers on offer, but if everyone makes a small donation on top of this a great deal of money can be raised for good causes. This is the undeniably positive foundation that Party For The People is built on.

PFTP has recently branched out to selling tickets for club nights, with a small booking fee being donated to charity. Links have already been established with a number of promoters in the city, including Drumroll, Planet Zogg, Displace, STI, Tinnitus, De:bug, Mixed in Sheffield and Cargo, and the social enterprise is also involved with events taking place in Manchester and Birmingham. Its most recent success story is raising money for Leeds Little Livers, a charity supporting children suffering with liver disease and related complications, with the help of the Collect! club night at the DLS/CADS complex.

There will be a Party For The People event taking place at DLS on 16th November, with a cross-section of resident DJs from local events performing alongside PFTP representative Chid Iheanacho, with a view to raising in excess of £2,000. Another local beneficiary of PFTP fundraising is CRESSST, a charity that helps children and young people learn conflict resolution skills for use at school and in the community.

If you want to get involved in this worthy cause or have suggestions for charities to support, you can contact PFTP on the above web links. Otherwise, just bear it in mind next time you are booking tickets for your favourite party. Paying a couple of quid extra for a good cause will not significantly affect your bank balance – in fact you won’t notice it – and if we all get into the habit of doing it we can really make a difference in the local community and beyond.

THE DERBY STORE.
58 ELDON STREET.
DERBYSTORE.CO.UK

After noticing what were once mere murmurs about the UK’s fastest growing women’s sport turn into excited chatter, we thought it time to investigate the world of Roller Derby.

It turns out that not only does our city boast one of the most formidable teams around, but we also just got the only shop in England to specialise solely in Roller Derby equipment. To be found in the units behind the Dev Green skate park, the Derby Store encapsulates the essence of the sport – small and unassuming at a glance, but with a sense of an imminent growth spurt heavy in the air.

The recurring phrase we heard when talking to owner Craig and veteran coach Jane was ‘no experience needed’, with many of the now successful skaters having turned up to a bout having never skated before. This wholly accessible, high octane sport is about to blow up in Britain, so if you want to get involved, speak to Jane at janemurraystringer@gmail.com or pop into the shop.

DROP THE BOMB.
DROPTHEBOMBSHEFFIELD.CO.UK

No, Drop The Bomb is not a terrorist organisation or an end-of-the-world suicide cult. Quite the opposite. The name refers to the act of dropping a particularly heavy crowd-pleasing tune with devastating results, something the guys from Drop the Bomb seem quite good at.

The Harley’s monthly third Thursday is packed full of soul, funk and hip-hop, ranging from up-tempo breaks to slower, sexier numbers. Not long into their second year on the scene, they’ve been hosts to bands like The Tempertons, Burleskimo, Soul Circle Gang, SoulFunkFul and Brute Foresight, with some big names on the horizon. The event routinely attracts members of Sheffield’s breakdance scene, as well as guest DJs like the guys from Hip Drop on November 15th. If you like your beats broken, your drums dusty and your horns funky then you know where to go.

THOU ART.
47 CHAPEL WALK.
0114 2700985
ENQUIRIES@THOUARTTATTOO.COM

You may well have noticed the absence of our favourite tattoo studio amongst our pages. Well, we’re positively ecstatic to be able to report that, like the proverbial phoenix, they’re back, and in prime position to retake their crown and eclipse even their own erstwhile glory days.

With new skipper Terry bringing heaps of experience to the helm, having run successful studios in Landon taan, as well as his own inimitable style, the palpable buzz in the air is not just from the inking guns. If you search online you’ll find examples of pieces that will make you see what we’re harping on about, but don’t take our word for it – pop in and meet the team yourself.

FAVOURITES.
OUR PICK OF THE BUNCH.

SUBLIMINAL PRINT.
FORUM SHOPS.
0114 276 3342
FACEBOOK.COM/SUBLIMINALPRINT

Subliminal Print set up shop in The Forum just five months ago, but in that time they have produced over 300 event banners and countless posters for gigs in and around Sheffield. Geared towards individuality and customisation, Subliminal works with local creatives to support unique ventures and get the word out the wider public. The shop also sells garments, mugs, gig tickets and window vinyl. Ace.

Subliminal is currently poised to launch a quarterly competition aimed at local designers which will see one lucky winner developing their own T-shirt for sale. They will receive their own rail in the shop, as well as space on the website and Facebook page, and of course a commission on every T-shirt sold.

Email subliminalprint@live.co.uk for competition details, visit facebook.com/SubliminalPrint for more information, or just drop into the shop and have a chinwag.

PEEL APART.
PEEL-APART.COM

Peel Apart is a new website dedicated to new music, art and style. If you’re interested in cutting edge arts information from across the globe, pooling resources in Sheffield, Leeds, London and even New York, then visit Peel Apart and see the latest in visual and audio media.

The site has many regular contributors who write about what interests them, usually in bite size chunks of 200 words or less. This is the place to go for a quick information fix. Each week also features a spotlight video, usually a new music video or arts project. We hope to see the Now Then films made by Nathan Gibson up there one week. The project is currently based across Leeds and Sheffield and will hopefully be expanding as the months progress. We wish them the best of luck with it. Go and take a look.

NOW THEN FILM #3.
FACEBOOK.COM/NOWTHENMAGAZINE

Locally based photographer filmmaker Nathan Gibson has already made two great films for Now Then in the past – one to celebrate our 4th birthday back in April, and one to celebrate the release of the Now Then ale in association with Abbeydale Brewery shortly after, both of which can be found on our YouTube channel – as well as shooting all the videos for Wordlife’s 21 Poets digital poetry slam project, launched last month as part of Off The Shelf Festival of Words.

Well, he’s got another beauty in the pipeline, this time focusing on ‘a day in the life’ of various Now Then employees, supporters and affiliates, connecting the dots between independent ventures across Sheffield. We are really, really happy with this one. It will be hitting the airwaves soon, so keep an eye on our Facebook page.



END.

YOU HEARD.



WarpFilms10

MAGNA Sheffield

Sat 17 Nov / 6pm-4am

Warp Films celebrates 10 years of pioneering cinema with an exclusive large-scale screening of **Dead Man's Shoes**, re-scored live by:

Gavin Clark (Clayhill, UNKLE) / Joel Cadbury (UNKLE, South) / Ted Barnes (Clayhill) / Ali Friend (Clayhill) / Jah Wobble / Marc Layton-Bennett / Helen Boulding

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